

86 Reported statements



1 Verb changes in reported statements

We use reported statements when we tell someone what another person has said. We usually use a past tense verb to report them:

I'm getting the 9.30 train. → *She said that she was getting the 9.30 train.*

After the past tense *said*, we usually change the tense of the person's words.

	THE PERSON'S WORDS		THE REPORTED STATEMENT
present simple	'I'm really hungry.'	past simple	She said that she <i>was</i> really hungry.
	'I have a gun.'	He said that he <i>had</i> a gun.	
present continuous	'The team's playing badly.'	past continuous	He said that the team <i>was playing</i> badly.
can	'I can do that.'	could	She said that she <i>could</i> do that.
will	'I will use the gun.'	would	He said that he <i>would</i> use the gun.
must	'You must be quiet!'	must/had to	She said that we <i>must/had to</i> be quiet.

Some verbs do not change in reported statements: *could*, *should*, *ought to*, *would*, *might*.
'I might go shopping later.' → *She said she might go shopping later.*

2 Reporting the past simple and present perfect

After the past simple and present perfect, we often use *had* + the *-ed* (past participle) form of the verb, e.g. *had/hadn't finished*. (This is called the past perfect tense.)

	THE PERSON'S WORDS	THE REPORTED STATEMENT
past simple	'It snowed a lot in the winter.'	They said that it <i>had snowed</i> a lot in the winter.
present perfect	'Anna hasn't arrived yet.'	He said that Anna <i>hadn't arrived</i> yet.

3 Pronoun changes in reported statements

		CHANGES TO	EXAMPLES
pronouns and possessives	I	he/she	'I'm cold.' → Dave said that he was cold.
	me	him/her	'They need me.' → She said that they needed her.
	my	his/her	'That's my book.' → He said that it was his book.
	ours	theirs	'Those seats are ours.' → Alice said that those seats were theirs.

Also: *we* → *they*, *us* → *them*, *our* → *their*, *you* → *I/we*, *you* → *me/us*, *your* → *my/our*, *yours* → *mine/ours*

Practice

1 Complete the reported statements with verbs, pronouns or possessives.

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| 0 'I haven't got any money.' | She said that she <i>hadn't</i> got any money. |
| 1 'I work at the factory.' | He said that he at the factory. |
| 2 'We can't leave early.' | They said that they leave early. |
| 3 'The parcel hasn't arrived.' | Jane said that the parcel arrived. |
| 4 'We aren't going to stay long.' | We said that we going to stay long. |
| 5 'Jim lost his job a few weeks ago.' | She said that Jim his job a few weeks ago. |
| 6 'I'm not happy about the date.' | He said that wasn't happy about the date. |
| 7 'We can wait for you.' | They said that they could wait for |
| 8 'You've taken my coat.' | The woman said that I had taken coat. |

2 GRAMMAR IN USE Match the reported statements 1–7 in the conversation with the person's words A–H below.

EMILY Mr Fellowes, could I ask you something?

MR F Yes, of course, Emily. What is it?

EMILY Well, in my interview they said that (0) *I wouldn't have to wait long for a promotion.* I've been here for two years and I think my work has been good. When I asked you about it last month, you said that (1) *you'd think about my promotion.*

MR F I did, but then two weeks ago you said that (2) *you were thinking about leaving.* I told you that (3) *I had thought about your promotion.* I said that (4) *I didn't think you were ready,* and, anyway, I said that (5) *I couldn't make the decision alone.*

EMILY Yes, I said that (6) *I had thought about leaving.* But that's because I'm beginning to think that I don't have a future here. Did you get my email last week? In it, I said that (7) *I thought I was ready* for a more difficult job. If you can't offer me one, I'll look for one with another company.

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| A 'I'm thinking about leaving.' | E 'You won't have to wait long for a promotion.'0..... |
| B 'I can't make the decision alone.' | F 'I think I'm ready ...' |
| C 'I'll think about your promotion.' | G 'I've thought about leaving.' |
| D 'I don't think you're ready.' | H 'I've thought about your promotion.' |

3 Make the words in the pictures into reported statements.

- 0 The robber said that he *wanted all the money*.....
- 1 The assistant said that she
- 2 The other robber said that they
- 3 The assistant said that
- 4 The first robber said
- 5 The customer said

